

Some notes from the Arusha National Park

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The following observations from the Arusha National Park seem worthy of publication. I first visited the Park in 1961, then regularly from 1964 until 1968 when I was appointed Park Warden and resided in it. The Park covers an area of some 50 square miles, and is situated at ca. 3° 15' S., 37° 00' E. The lowest point is at 4,600 feet above sea-level, but the summit of Mt. Meru, at nearly 15,000 feet, is also in the area. Unless otherwise indicated, all the observations are from below 6,500 feet. The nomenclature followed is that of Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952-55).

Ardeola idae, Madagascar Squacco Heron: One in white breeding dress was seen on 2nd October 1968 on the edge of a swamp, and another such on 21st October 1969 at a temporary pool in grassland. The most recent reference to the occurrence of this species in Africa is by Irwin (1969). The two birds which I saw were presumably on passage back to Madagascar.

Ciconia nigra, Black Stork: Since 1965 a single bird, possibly always the same individual, has been seen regularly between late October and early March, at temporary pools both in open grassland and forest. Presumably this is a case of a migrant from the Palaearctic. Indeed in accordance with Benson *et al.* (1970: 4) it would be the southernmost record in modern times, even though the species does of course also breed in southern Africa. (Apart from the Kenya records given by Benson *et al.*, Prof. Dr. E. Schüz has drawn attention to one of a bird ringed in Pomerania and recovered in northern Uganda, see *Vogelzug* 11, 1940: 24 and *Vogelwarte* 22, 1964: 300—Ed.)

Falco peregrinus, Peregrine: Two occupied breeding sites have been observed, on the cliffs of the Ngurdoto and Meru craters. In the case of the former very small young were seen being fed in September, indicating egg-laying in August, thus agreeing with Brown & Amadon (1968: 855) for Kenya.

Buteo rufofuscus, Augur Buzzard: Altogether six occupied nesting sites have been seen, all of which were in trees, despite the presence of many crags, and thus agreeing with the observations of Brown & Amadon (1968: 630). One occupied nest held eggs in September, thus agreeing with Brown & Amadon, who also give egg-laying in Tanzania in October to November. However, the other five records, of small young or eggs, indicate egg-laying in March to May, i.e. during the rains, *contra* Brown & Amadon.

Apus niansae, Brown Swift: A male, now in the University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge, identified by C. W. Benson, was collected as it flew out of a crevice in a cliff-face on 31st March. Its wing-length is 148 mm only, thus agreeing with figures for this species in Brooke (1969: 15). Some thirty individuals were regularly seen at all times of the day around this cliff-face from March to May, and it is presumed that they were breeding. Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1952: 779) give breeding as probable in Tanzania in December and January.

Lybius melanopterus, Brown-breasted Barbet: The only breeding record in Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1952: 709) is "Mt. Kilimanjaro foothills, February". Three occupied nesting holes have been found, to each of which parents were seen bringing food, in January (one) and June (two). This species is common in the Park below 5,500 feet, in broad-leaved woodland.

Locustella fluviatilis, River Warbler: An unsexed specimen was obtained on

25th April 1968 at Lake Momela. It is now in the British Museum (Natural History), and has been identified by Mrs. B. P. Hall.

Cisticola robusta, Stout Cisticola: Two collected specimens were sent to the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, and have been reported on by M. A. Traylor. They are unusually pale compared to specimens from the Kenya highlands, though a few do approach them in pallor. Furthermore, five other specimens from northern Tanzania (Monduli, Loliondo and vicinity of Kili-manjaro), in the British Museum (Natural History) which were lent to Traylor could not be separated at all from paler Kenya specimens. There is therefore no justification for recognising a distinct subspecies.

Hirundo senegalensis and *smithii*, Mosque and Wire-tailed Swallows: Shortly after the first buildings in the Park were completed in 1963, pairs of *Hirundo smithii* arrived to nest on the walls. After the first brood or two had been raised, pairs of *senegalensis* arrived and took over newly completed nests, which they enlarged for themselves. This did not deter the smaller swallows, who started building again nearby on the same walls. In one case, where the nest of a pair of *H. smithii* was taken over, the original owners built their new nest onto the side of the almost completed nest of the pair of *H. senegalensis*. When the larger birds completed their nest they were ousted by a pair of *Apus caffer* White-rumped Swifts. The result was that the two pairs of birds, *Apus caffer* and *H. smithii*, reared their young in adjacent nests with no gap between them, despite continual bickering. It is also interesting to note that these two nests were inside the gate-house, which was completely shut up at dusk (19.00 hrs.) and not opened until after dawn (06.30 hrs.).

Buphagus sp., Oxpecker: Both *B. africanus* and *erythrorhynchus* occur. On a date unrecorded, several individuals of one or the other were seen on a giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis* at 22.00 hrs., thus more than three hours after sunset. This agrees with the observation by Dowsett (1968), who found that both species occasionally roost on game animals at night.

On one occasion one or the other species has been seen to attempt to alight on a bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus*, an abundant species in the Park. The bushbuck objected, and shook the oxpecker off. Attwell (1966: 33) was unable to give any record in nature of such an association.

References:

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An African Pitta, *Pitta angolensis longipennis*, from Ethiopia by Emil K. Urban & T. Hakanson

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On 3rd July 1970 in the main rain season (June-September) of Ethiopia an African Pitta, *Pitta angolensis longipennis* (Reichenow), was collected in a forest of young eucalyptus, 10 km west of Addis Ababa, 2,440 m, 9° 3' N., 38° 40' E.